

# Nipple Shields

Nipple shields can be helpful for babies who are having trouble learning to breastfeed.

## APPLYING THE SHIELD

- ◆ Turn the shield inside out so it looks like a Mexican hat to apply.
- ◆ Place the nipple portion of the shield over your nipple and smoothe the “brim” onto your breast.
- ◆ Wetting the shield in warm water or using a few drops of breastmilk before applying can help it cling to your skin.



## WEANING BABY FROM THE NIPPLE SHIELD

- ◆ Let your baby nurse using the shield to ease initial hunger. As he gets sleepy, detach him from your breast, ease off the shield and attach the baby to your bare breast.
- ◆ Let your baby nurse on one breast with the shield using the cradle hold until sleepy and then slide her over to the bare breast now using a cross-cradle hold to “trick” the baby. Nursing lying down and then changing breasts can work too.
- ◆ Try laid back breastfeeding and skin-to-skin. Remove your shirt and bra. Remove baby’s clothing except for a diaper. Lean back in a chair or on pillows in the bed. Place baby on your chest above the breasts and let baby find your bare nipple. Support and guide your baby but do not force movement. Let your baby wiggle and “bob” to the breast.

## MORE TO KNOW:

- ▶ Good positioning and latch-on are important. If your baby doesn’t get enough of the shield in her mouth, she won’t be able to get milk and could get dehydrated or lose weight.
- ▶ Nipple shields can help a baby learn to suck better by providing a more firm nipple on the roof of the baby’s mouth.
- ▶ Nipple shields are not a good choice for mothers with sore nipples. Try a different position, make sure the baby’s mouth is open wide, and ask a breastfeeding expert for help.
- ▶ Monitor your baby to make sure he is getting milk through the shield. Is there milk in the tip of the nipple shield at the end of a feeding? Does your firm breast change from feeling hard like your forehead to feeling like your cheek - softer? Does your baby have enough wet and dirty diapers? Infants should have 3 or more dirty and 4 or more wet diapers by 4 days of age.

For more information call: